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CONTEMPORARY ECHOES

FOR THE QUIET OF THE STUDY

(From the *Boston Post*)

Probably as a Christmas present to the Administration Colonel George Harvey, the accomplished editor of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, has gone abroad, and the President, the Assistant President and the Secretary of the Navy are allowed to pass their holidays in a peaceful serenity quite worthy of the season. For the sake of those at Washington we are glad, but for ourselves we trust the doughty Colonel will soon be back at his desk paying his compliments to all in his unique and brilliant fashion. We are of course interested in John Galsworthy, and Prohibition, and Oscar Wilde as a Critic, and the current issue of *THE REVIEW* is full of valuable and important articles, but we none the less miss the dash and élan of the "attack" to which we have become accustomed, and without Harvey the *REVIEW* is as *Hamlet* with the grave digger at the head of the cast, or as Paris must have been during those periods in the old days when Napoleon Bonaparte for one reason or another had turned away from the thrilling activities which made Parisian life just one dinged tingle after another. There are some things Harvey does so well that we like to "let George do it," and when he goes away we miss him.

We have a lurking suspicion that *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* will soon be giving our sprightly and diverting contemporary *Life* a run for its laurels in the matter of significant satire. Certainly since its editor, Colonel George Harvey, has begun to concentrate his energies upon its pages, instead of spreading himself out in numerous other highly diversified directions, there has come to be a very decided vein of pep, of the salt of wit and savor of satire, in these erstwhile scenes of solemnity to which we used to retire when we needed sleep. No journal of our own or other days that we recall has ever printed a more enlightening bit of engaging speculation than that to be found in the dialogue on "Patriotism and Profits" with which Colonel Harvey opens his November issue. It pricks with a sharply pointed pen certain bubbles of pretense and eagle-screaming "bunk" which a certain class of walrus-eyed promoters have blown in respect to the American loan to the Allies, and with a strong dramatic touch tells the truth about it in a climacterical outburst that we find truly impressive. If this piece of Harvey's had been written by Bernard Shaw it would be used by ladies' dramatic associations all over the country as a curtain raiser and possibly played by Arnold Daly in his vaudeville circuits; as it is, it is a thing to be read in the quiet of the study and to be thought about later in the silent

watches of the night, when we and our real selves have a chance to get better acquainted with each other.

AUTOCRACY BY INDIRECTION

(From the Bridgeport Telegram)

Colonel George Harvey, of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, is terribly worried at the present time because this nation is a "one-man despotism," and its president, he thinks, can at any time plunge the nation into a terrible war, without first consulting Congress, or the Cabinet, or military and naval experts. Not even the Kaiser has this power, says Colonel Harvey, and the president of the United States shouldn't have it.

Colonel Harvey has certainly hit upon a rich gem in the collections of Useless Worries. As a matter of fact this nation cannot declare war save by act of Congress; and as for any overt act causing a war—it takes two to make a war. If no other nation can get into war with us except by such an elaborate process at home as Colonel Harvey would have us adopt here, then we must be safe. Or if we are not safe, then what would be the difference should we adopt those self-same safeguards here?

Colonel Harvey says that the Kaiser can't declare war, the King of England can't declare war, the President of France can't declare war, and the Czar of Russia cannot; but the fact remains, that all of those nations, somehow, have blundered into a terribly disastrous war, while our nation, with its theoretically wrong system, remains at peace, and will continue to do so until Congress decrees otherwise.

Colonel Harvey is a fine theorist, but the fact is that he wants us to discard a system that has proved to work for one that has proved it will not work.

[We perceive little, if any, cause for apprehension in the existing situation. President Wilson at the outset declared his intentions to keep this nation out of conflict, and thus far has succeeded in doing so, to the quite general satisfaction of the country. But the fact remains that he or another holding his place—Mr. Roosevelt, for example—might at any moment, by the turn of a hand or a phrase, so commit us as to render embroilment inevitable. It is the mere possession of such power by any one man that we regard as a menace which should be guarded against.—EDITOR]

ATMOSPHERIC

(From the Hartford Courant)

Colonel George Harvey of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, the man who started Wilson and then was asked by that gentleman to let go, as such support was no longer helpful, has just returned from Europe. No man in the country has the gift of saying more crisp and pertinent things than Harvey, and now, as he stepped off the steamer he told the reporters that President Wilson ought to be the one to go abroad and Colonel House should take up the White House duties. However, it is Colonel House who goes abroad, and of this mission the New York Sun says that there should be an "inspector of ambassadors" and sarcastically it suggests that Senator Martine, the New Jersey Senator placed in his position by Wilson, who no longer loves him, should introduce the bill to this effect. The Sun says:

"Since the beginning of the Wilson administration there have been altogether too many Mr. Inspector Fixits traveling abroad at the public expense as 'personal representatives of the President,' and exercising without warrant of law an abnormal and highly mischievous influence on the course of public events. The deplorable results produced in the single instance of Mexico are sufficiently fresh in the nation's memory to require no advertisement. If further diplomatic or extra diplomatic experiments of the sort are to be undertaken in Europe, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia or elsewhere, let the Senate have its say in the matter. Let the exportation and importation of atmosphere be carried on in the manner intended by the Constitution."

PLAYING FAST AND LOOSE

(From the Boston Transcript)

Colonel George Harvey says that the Central Empires are "playing fast and loose with the United States." It would be hard to tell what foreign Powers are not playing fast and loose with the United States. Even Hayti and Santo Domingo have been doing a little of that, and the calm of Carranza has been doing a great deal. And really, since there is no placing our Government for a month's time together on any foreign matter, it may be unreasonable to expect foreign Governments to do anything else. For the sake of the country's interests, it is to be hoped that the Administration will at last see its way clear to maintain a persistent and consistent course on this submarine question, and will not permit itself to be entangled in questions of detail to the sacrifice of general principles. One of the principles that we should stand out for is that of ordinary common humanity. Considerations of humanity are not to be put out of sight and hearing and thought forever merely because a merchant ship at sea, supposing that a submarine may be in the neighborhood, puts on all steam and seeks to get out of harm's way. They are not utterly neutralized by the fact that a passenger ship may have a gun on board—a gun which would be utterly useless except for a certain amount of protection against a piratical attack.

DENSITY

(From the Knoxville Sentinel)

Mr. Wilson reserved his intimate and confidential counsels for the ear of his taciturn and somewhat mysterious friend, Colonel House. Hence, we presume, Colonel Harvey's ill-natured and official suggestion to the President that he go to Europe to learn what the Europeans think of him, and leave Colonel House in the chair.

But Mr. Wilson has all that he can attend to looking out for the interests and welfare of the American people, and as President he would not be at liberty to adopt Colonel Harvey's suggestion, even if he had the consuming curiosity with which Colonel Harvey apparently credits him, to take that trouble to learn what these foreigners think of him.

It has never been the American idea to take our cue from the Europeans in shaping our international politics, and it is not a good time to begin when the policies pursued by these have engulfed them in the cataclysm of which we are the eye-witnesses.

[He thinks we meant it.—EDITOR.]

SAVING FACES

(From the Hartford Courant)

Colonel George Harvey, back from England, says that he has information from an official that seventy German submarines have been destroyed or captured, but that the news has been kept from the public. The only reason the colonel advances for this reticence on the part of the authorities is that England didn't want her people to know that Germany had so many submarines! That's a good, all-sufficient reason—a reason that may be called typical with the British censor. Germany knew how many submarines she had and she went right along building more as fast as possible, whether any were lost or not, but the real reason of the British silence, officially, was probably that some one was ashamed because Great Britain didn't have more submarines when the war began. There were faces to be saved, so the enemy submarines, officially, were not destroyed.

WHY?

(From the Syracuse Post-Standard)

A newspaper correspondent has given Colonel House the title of "Assistant President of the United States." We suspect that President Wilson will not like that.—*Albany Journal*.

Tut, tut! 'Twas Colonel George Harvey dubbed him so; and no matter what the President may think, its aptness was so obvious that the title has stuck.

[To the best of our information, neither the President nor Colonel House has objected to an appellation which all must concede is both accurate and complimentary. Why should they?—EDITOR]